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Butler, Benjamin.

Speech of Hon. Benjamin Butler
of Mass., delivered in the house
of representatives, June 15, 1870





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SPEECH
OF
HON. BENJAMIN F. BUTLER,
OF MASSACHUSETTS,

DELIVERED
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

JUNE 15, 1870.

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INDEPENDENCE OF CUBA.

The House having under consideration the joint resolution (H. R. No. 329) in relation to the contest between the people of Cuba and the Government of Spain—

Mr. BUTLER, of Massachusetts, said:

Mr. SPEAKER: I should not trespass upon the patience of the House at this late hour of the debate, although up to this moment, under the rules of the House, no member of the House not being a member of the Committee on Foreign Relations has had a right to the floor—and I now hold it through the indulgence of my friend from Illinois, [Mr. Judd]—did I not view this Cuban question from a somewhat different stand-point from which it has been presented by other gentlemen during this debate, both as regards its relations to the administration of public affairs and in its personal aspects.

I have ever been a friend and am now a friend of the independence of Cuba, and in favor of the annexation of Cuba to this country. In 1850 I was a member of the order of the "Lone Star." I sympathized with Lopez and Crittenden, and was a warm personal friend of General Quitman, the leading friend of Cuba of that day. I have never since ceased to desire that Cuba and the West India Islands should become a part of this Republic. The studies of this question in that day taught me the importance of the islands between the two continents to this country. I believe for one that no country can be great without tropical possessions. What would England be to-day without her possessions in the East, from which she draws her wealth? All that there is left of Spain is Cuba and Porto Rico to give her power and wealth. All that is left of Portugal—but there is nothing left of power in Portugal since she lost Brazil. All that is left of the once powerful Netherlands, that dictated maritime law to the world, are the Moluccas and Sumatra. Therefore, I desire to see everywhere our arms, our laws, our liberties, civilization, and our power extended. And I hope that within my day I shall see the stars and stripes floating as evidences of our control and beneficent power at the Isthmus of Darien;

while the traveler at the north pole shall mistake the radiance of its red and white for the glow of the Aurora. And I have no doubt of living, if to the allotted age of man, long enough to see this prophetic hope fulfilled.

And were I to-day to speak according to my sympathies and according to my wishes; and were I to speak from my heart, and not from my judgment; were I to speak as an individual without the responsibilities which I owe to society, and the part I am obliged to take in public affairs, I would say, let us have Cuba at any expense of blood and treasure. As I have before said to this House, let us have San Domingo and the other islands of the Antilles when we can get them.

I now rise, therefore, to speak only because I believe the course taken in carrying on this war in Cuba, if war it can be called, has retarded and is this day retarding the independence of Cuba and the consequent and subsequent annexation of that island to this country. When the rebellion in Cuba broke out, as an accompaniment of the rebellion against the Spanish monarchy, I looked forward with confident belief that from that hour the independence of Cuba was achieved. I believed that her people would rush to arms; I was certain in my own mind that there would be enough of brave and gallant men on her soil to break the power of Spain, as indeed there were if they had moved to separate from Spain; but they did not, but preferred to revolutionize with the mother country. I sympathized with the movement in the direction of their freedom; I watched every fluctuation of affairs there with the intensest interest as the news thereof were brought to us.

I know that not only was that my own state of mind at that time, but it was the state of mind of all the highest officials of this Government, who have been here maligned and abused as in complicity with the agents of Spain. Specially do I know, from certain personal knowledge, that that was the state of mind and feeling, as an individual citizen, of the able gentleman, the Secretary of State, who, as it appears from the charges made here, although he has passed through a long

life of usefulness and high honor, although he has been Governor of the Empire State by the election of the people, although he has represented that State with great credit in the Senate of the United States, although in private fortune in condition so that he is far above any necessity or desire to add to his means—such man being Secretary of State, has not escaped the wholesale calumny dealt in. And we have been told here gravely on this floor that the secret of the action of that high officer, as the premier of this country, is a desire to give a paltry fee to his son-in-law.

I was more astonished and more shocked than I can well describe when in the heat of debate my very good friend, the gentleman from Nevada, [Mr. FITCH,] said that such a story had gone abroad far and wide and had never been contradicted. Why, sir, I hold in my hand a New York newspaper, the contents of which should certainly be known to our Cuban friends, for that is their headquarters, dated January 12, 1870, from which, with your leave, Mr. Speaker, I will read a sentence or two. The first that I shall read is an extract from a letter written by Mr. Sidney Webster, who has the honor to be son-in-law of the distinguished Secretary, a gentleman with whom I have been acquainted for many years. Although there are some things on which we have agreed to disagree, yet never upon anything which constitutes a gentleman and a man of honor. He writes, in a letter dated the 5th of January, 1870, and addressed to the Spanish minister, Mr. Roberts, among other things which are entirely conclusive against this slander, as follows:

"You are personally aware that for all services of my copartner and myself, up to December last, full payment was made, and that the whole amount paid to me for services in the successive years of 1867, 1868, and 1869, has been but \$3,870 in currency, and this as compensation for labor in the courts, or connected with judicial proceedings of such quantity and character as to justify me in saying that the fees asked and paid were reasonable, and within the sum usually paid for such services to members of the bar in the city of New York, such as it would be proper to charge to private clients having as large interests at stake, and as can afford no possible ground of imputation when charged to a foreign Government. You are also aware that my professional connection with the Spanish Government began as far back as the year 1865, in the affair of the steamship Meteor and other matters growing out of hostilities between Spain and Chili, and of course had no possible relation to present questions or to the present administration of this Government."

To all these allegations Mr. Roberts, the Spanish minister, replies in the affirmative, and that the charges are all untrue. In the same paper will be found a letter from Edwards Pierpont, the district attorney for New York, declaring that this fee was by far too little for the professional services rendered. That letter is as follows:

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK,
41 CHAMBERS STREET, January 10, 1870.

MY DEAR SIR: Yours of this date is received. I would say in reply that the professional services of Mr. Webster rendered to the Spanish Government came under my observation. Those services were arduous, involving great responsibility, industry, and legal ability; they were performed with the

greatest fidelity to the Spanish Government, and with an efficiency and success which merited the highest approbation of his client. Considering the magnitude of the interests which Mr. Webster represented, and the successful way in which he managed those interests, I would think \$10,000 a reasonable fee for the services performed.

Very truly, yours,

EDWARDS PIERREPONT.

F. W. STOUGHTON, esq.

Thus it appears that four years before Mr. Fish had any connection with the present Administration, and three years before Cuba revolted, Mr. Webster had a retainer from the Spanish Government, was the attorney, in the ordinary course of business, of the Spanish Government, in matters arising out of the complications of that Government with Chili.

Mr. FITCH. The gentleman will allow me a single remark. When I spoke upon this subject yesterday I had never seen the contradiction of the statement to which I referred. I was under the impression that it had never been contradicted. I have no desire to do any injustice to the Secretary of State or to his son-in-law; and in view of this contradiction I can do nothing less than retract the intimation which I made upon the floor of the House yesterday with reference to Mr. Webster having received a large fee from the Spanish Government for the peculiar and particular case of the release of the gun-boats, and to retract also the intimation that the Secretary of State has been improperly influenced in his action toward Cuba by the connection of his son-in-law with the gun-boat case.

Mr. BUTLER, of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I am glad to hear the gentleman's retraction. It does honor to his sense of justice. I knew the truth only needed to be brought to his attention to secure his proper action to set the matter right. And, sir, if we had time to follow one after another these slanders, to which it has been thought best, in behalf of Cuba, to subject honorable men who are opposing the cause of Cuba in its present shape—though, as I insist, these slanders are actually doing it damage—we should find similar retractions attending the different steps of the investigation.

Let me here refer to charges made affecting the character of another gentleman, a gentleman whom I have been proud to call my friend for thirty years; a gentleman who has held the highest offices short of the Presidency under the Government; a gentleman who formerly represented the district which I now represent on this floor; a gentleman who was once the Attorney General of the United States; a gentleman not surpassed in either hemisphere in learning and ability, and the peer of any one on this floor as a man of honor. We were told, if I understood the veiled and guarded charge, that he too, as the paid servant of Spain, had written the Spanish minister's letters to this Government, and that as paid attorney of the United States at the same time, in an inconsistent engagement, he had written the message of the President of the United States. Now, I happen to know—and I speak of what I do know—that that gentleman never

knew that this message was to come in; his first knowledge of it was after it had been read in this House. I know this from sources which cannot be mistaken.

A MEMBER. To whom do you refer?

Mr. BUTLER, of Massachusetts. I refer to the gentleman to whom I understood my colleague [Mr. BANKS] to refer; and if I do my colleague wrong in my reference, I pause here that he may set the matter right. I refer to Hon. Mr. Cushing, of Massachusetts.

Let me say another thing. Not only did he not write the President's message for pay, but I affirm that this same gentleman never received one dollar as a retainer or as pay for services from the Spanish minister directly or indirectly upon any occasion, whether as regards Cuba, or Chili, or Peru, or anything else, since this revolution broke out. My colleague must have been misinformed. I am certain that he acted upon misinformation. He would not have pursued the course he did as regards this gentleman except upon misinformation. He is wrong in the general and wrong in detail in this regard; not willfully, not wittingly, but mistakenly. Mr. Cushing neither wrote the message nor knew that it was to be written. Thank Heaven, we have at present Attorneys General and Secretaries of State and Presidents who can write their own messages without the aid of any hired attorneys! I repeat, that Mr. Cushing never knew the message was to be sent in, and that he never has acted as counsel in the matter or received one dollar as a fee, whether in gold or currency, from the Spanish Government since Cuba has been engaged in the contest with Spain. This much is due to personal friendship as well as to public duty.

Now, sir, it is this course of those who have undertaken to represent Cuba that has prevented us from seeing brought about the independence of Cuba. If there had been no insurrection, if this insurrection had not sought to embroil this country, and thereby make Spain jealous of an apparent attempt to wrest from her the fairest jewel of her crown, I have no doubt that, as the result of the revolution in Spain, we should have seen Cuba free and ready to treat with us for annexation, as years ago was Texas.

But this has been delayed. And how? It has been because instead of sending out arms to Cuba, for Cuban men to fight with, more Cubans were assembled in New York than ever were in arms in Cuba in any one body. And what have they been doing there? Have they been deprived of sending arms to their neighbors in Cuba? No. Let me say to you, what every member of the Cuban junta has been told officially from this Government, that if they chose to buy arms and ammunition and munitions of war, so long as belligerency was not recognized, they could put those arms and munitions of war on a vessel which might sail out from New York, or any other port, under our flag unquestioned and unsearched until it reached within a marine league of the coast of Cuba.

Mr. RANDALL. Is that of record?

Mr. BUTLER, of Massachusetts. What does the gentleman say?

Mr. RANDALL. Has our Government ever said so on the record?

Mr. BUTLER, of Massachusetts. Yes, sir; we said so when we passed the neutrality law.

Mr. RANDALL. No generalities; I want a specific answer.

Mr. BUTLER, of Massachusetts. We have said so at all times. We say so now. I agree, if they want to send arms to Cuba, that they shall have every one they can pay for and as many as they can use.

Mr. RANDALL. When and where has our Government said so?

Mr. BUTLER, of Massachusetts. Over and over again, sir.

Mr. RANDALL. Where?

Mr. BUTLER, of Massachusetts. I say again, in the neutrality law, which probably the gentleman has never read. [Laughter.]

Mr. RANDALL. I want the gentleman to state distinctly where he finds authority for what he has just said?

Mr. BUTLER, of Massachusetts. I cannot yield any further. Let me say again that under the same law Cuba can send every man she can get to go in a ship from Boston or New York to the island of Cuba unsearched and untouched, with the full knowledge of and without hindrance on the part of our Government, until she gets within a marine league of Cuba.

Again, sir, the Cubans have exercised both powers, and can again, because it does not interfere with the neutrality act. The neutrality act is against sending armed expeditions; and the difficulty has been with all the expeditions sent out to Cuba by the junta that they have insisted, for the purpose of embroiling this nation in a war with Spain, on putting arms and men in the same vessel, with a single exception only, and that was in the case of the privateer Hornet. When they wished to get her out what did they do?

They kept the arms off of her and sent her to sea, and although our Government knew what was being done and knew very well where the vessel was going, just as they knew where the Spanish gun-boats were going, not being an armed vessel they did not interfere with her. She went outside, and took on her guns and arms and munitions of war, as she claims, and she might have been now cruising upon the high seas, the terror of Spain and of all other people, I doubt not, if it had not been that her captain got frightened at the risk he was running in the service of an unacknowledged Government, and put in at Wilmington; and when she came there as an armed cruiser of an unrecognized power we had to do with her as we claimed that England should have done with the Alabama, after she had escaped from Liverpool, when she came into Nassau or New Providence—we retained her. At the solicitation of the friends of Cuba she has since been returned to those who claimed her, upon the agreement that she shall not further attempt to violate our neutrality law. "Do not violate

any of our laws, do not undertake to embroil us with any other nation, and you may do as you please," has been the universal language of this Government to the Cubans.

Now, one word in reference to the Spanish gun-boats, of which so much has been said which is unjust to our Government. I wish to state to gentlemen here that those Spanish gun-boats did not carry out to sea from New York a single gun or a single arm, except perhaps there may have been one in the pockets of their officers. They were allowed to go out unarmed vessels, as the *Hornet* went out, under the conditions required by our laws. Their cannon were put into another vessel, and shipped as merchandise, just as we have cleared over and over again ships for the Cubans filled with like merchandise. There will be no trouble to Cuban expeditions if they will only not put their arms and their men on board the same ship, so as to make it an armed expedition. There is not a man of them who does not know that they can ship arms. I take it that the New York Sun would be a good authority for Cuba, if not good authority for anybody else. The Sun says:

"Last October Secretary Fish, after a protracted interview with General Grant, told a Cuban gentleman that there was no law to prevent the shipment of arms to Cuba for the use of the insurgents. Notwithstanding this declaration, the Junta Cubana deferred shipping war supplies openly, for they had no faith in anything that Secretary Fish might say after he had ordered the seizure of the *Catharine Whiting*, which vessel was libeled solely on the ground that she was about to carry arms to the Cuban insurgents.

"Determined to know how far they could go without violating the neutrality laws, the junta determined to ship a small cargo of arms and ammunition.

"Mr. Grinnell told them he would give clearance to a man-of-war loaded down with arms and munitions of war, provided the vessel carried no more men than its customary crew.

"The next thing done was to purchase a small schooner, and place on board a small cargo of arms. A large vessel and cargo were not risked, for the Junta believed that though Secretary Fish said they could ship them, and Collector Grinnell said he would clear the vessel, the United States marshal would not permit her departure."

"Marshal Harlow was invited to go on board the schooner. The marshal examined the ship's papers, found them 'all right,' and said he had no obstacle to place in the way. At four p. m. the schooner, the *Maria*, Captain Ingard, sailed for Cuba with twelve hundred muskets and a due proportion of cartridges and other munitions.

"The Government was duly informed of what was going on last evening. The State Department telegraphed that if all was regular as represented no hindrance could be placed in the way.

"This is all the Cubans ask. They need no more."

Now, I commend that article to the gentlemen on the other side who ask questions, together with the proverb that "Fools may ask questions which philosophers cannot answer."

Now, sir, we are asked to do—what? As I read the resolutions of the minority and of the majority of the committee—and I beg their pardon all round for saying so—they just escape nothing at all by being mischievous; for they provide nothing in the world that is practical. Only one thing do they tend to do, and that is to embroil us in a quarrel with Spain. And gentlemen get up and say, "Well, are we afraid of Spain? Are we not ready to have a war with Spain, we, so great a Power!"

I answer to that, as a Fourth of July oration business, yes; but as a statesman, dealing with high questions of State, I say, no! And why? Because Spain is just in a condition to desire war with us, a nation of greatly superior power, upon any fair and just and honorable pretense. See what is her condition. She has a Government only provisional, in a transition state, not with any assured fixity, and with no hold upon the people. But if Spain was brought into a war with this country on any fair pretext, what would be its effect upon the present regency? It would rally around that Government all her people. It would unite them by a common bond of patriotism. It would give the Spanish Government prestige at home. It would make the regency a dynasty. It would more than compensate for that prestige Spain would lose in consequence of our taking Cuba from her. She sees that she would lose Cuba, and, in my judgment, Cuba is lost to her already.

Let us see, gentlemen, how we ourselves are situated, whether we are ready to go into the contest; for we are here to take care of the interests of our own country first of all; we are sent here for that purpose solely. Foreign relations are, by the Constitution, committed to the Executive. We have a debt of over twenty-five hundred million dollars. Twelve hundred million dollars of that debt are held abroad in the shape of bonds of this Government. We are seeking to fund our debt at a lower rate of interest. The bankers of Europe do not desire that we shall fund our debt at a lower rate of interest than it is now paying, because they would, in short, be obliged to take a four per cent. bond for a six per cent. one, and they do not doubt our ability to pay. And if Spain could only strike up a little war with us, or even a rumor of war, it would be a pretext for the moneyed men not to take any bonds at a lower rate of interest, and so an end of funding; and if there should be any war that amounted to anything, it would furnish a necessity for our issuing more bonds, in order to meet the expenses which would be entailed upon us by a war.

Therefore, it is to the advantage of European capitalists to have us get into a war with Spain, because they know full well that our resources are such that whatever interest our bonds may bear we will be sure to pay; and they would be glad to have the opportunity to make another speculation in purchasing our bonds for forty to sixty cents on the dollar, as they did during the late war. It is apparent, therefore, that there is every inducement for Spain, provided she can find a plausible pretense, to get into war with us, and that, too, without infringing the interests of the capital of Europe.

I do not know that this language of mine is very diplomatic; perhaps quite the reverse. But I tell you exactly what presses on my mind; let it have its legitimate effect on you. That being the condition of things, are we not the veriest—I will not use hard words, however—are we not extremely unwise if we give such an opportunity for injury to the coun-

try, when we are not called upon to give it? If it be said that we are called upon to give that opportunity, let me ask, why are we so called upon? My colleague [Mr. BANKS] says that we are called upon because there are one million five hundred thousand people struggling in Cuba for liberty and independence against one hundred thousand natives of Spain who are supporting the Spanish cause. Let me not misstate the gentleman. He says, "There are one million six hundred thousand souls in Cuba, and of that number one million five hundred thousand, nearly all the Cuban population, are in sympathy with this contest." Yet he tells us in the very next breath that of the one hundred thousand Spanish inhabitants of that island thirty thousand have volunteered to support the authority of Spain; that, in addition, they hold all the offices and constitute the greater portion of the army. Now, is not that a pretty large proportion of volunteer soldiers—thirty thousand out of one hundred thousand inhabitants, men, women, and children?

Mr. BANKS. That is the statement in the documents that have been sent us.

Mr. BUTLER, of Massachusetts. I do not say the gentleman made his statement without his documents. But I ask, if such is the statement in the documents, of what value are the documents? Are we to involve ourselves in a war with Spain on the proposition that there are one hundred thousand Spaniards in Cuba, of whom thirty thousand have volunteered as soldiers to support the authority of Spain? Does the gentleman understand the force of the figures he is giving us? He says the whole amount of the population of Cuba is one million six hundred thousand, of which six or seven hundred thousand are slaves, leaving less than a million whites altogether. Now, if you allow the same proportion of volunteering that there was in our war, which, with all our patriotism and bounties, never amounted to one in twenty of the population, the result would be that the thirty thousand volunteers in the island of Cuba would represent a population of six hundred thousand. So, on the gentleman's own showing, if he will now apply a little arithmetic to his statement and not be misled by documents which perhaps are made to mislead, he will find that a majority of the inhabitants of Cuba are opposed to this insurrection, and opposed to it for the same reason, I suppose, that I am—that it is hurtful to the cause of the independence of Cuba.

Again, he tells us, to show how little we must be carried along by the rhetoric of my friend, which was exceedingly able and adroit, and for which I give him high praise—he tells us in his speech of yesterday that he had the record of two hundred battles.

Mr. BANKS. Nearly two hundred.

Mr. BUTLER, of Massachusetts. He states in his report that "owing to the imperfect means of communication possessed by the Cubans only the principal actions in which they are engaged have been reported." He states that this rebellion or insurrection broke out on

the 11th of October, 1868, and that the last fights in regard to which reports have been received took place in December, 1869, and January, 1870. Therefore, the records of these principal battles extend only over about fifteen months. That would give us, for two hundred battles, at the rate of one principal battle every two and a quarter days, Sundays included. Now, if any of us believe that, we ought to be in favor of recognizing the independence of Cuba; for if any people will fight one "principal battle" every two and a quarter days, including Sundays, church time and all, for fifteen months, they ought to be free! Sir, is it on such statements of facts as these that we are asked to condemn our Government for its action hitherto in regard to Cuba?

Let me state a few facts that will not be denied, which demonstrate that the Cuban war, with its battles every other day, is all a fiction on paper. The first great fact is that there never has been so much tobacco and sugar raised in the island of Cuba during its history as during the last year of this devastating war; there never has been so much commerce with that island as during the last year; there never has been so great financial prosperity in that island as during the last year, as shown by the fact that the bank of Havana, which bears all the expenses of the Government in that island, has furnished the means for carrying on the contest against the revolutionists, and has continued to pay gold at its counter, which we could not do in our war.

Now, how can that be if this war is going on? The difficulty is there is no war in Cuba; there can be no war in Cuba; and Mr. Jordan tells us there is no war, because he says there are only ten thousand men of the insurgents in arms, and they are shut out from the rest of the world. What is the proposition of these friends of Cuba? It is that we shall recognize a nation which they admit is shut out from the rest of the world. Shut out by what? A cordon of Spanish bayonets. What is meant by recognition of a nation? It means that we should acknowledge Cuba as an equal belligerent with Spain, with the rights that appertain to a nation; and if she does not behave well in that position, that we may interfere to make her behave properly in carrying on that war which we declare to exist. How shall we send an ambassador to her upon such an errand, unless we get a passport to go to her through the Spanish lines?

My friend from Minnesota, [Mr. WILKINSON,] in the exuberance of his rhetoric, in the peroration of his address last evening told us that the Cuban insurrection has no towns; that it has been driven from the towns and from the sea-coast, and, like some of the Scottish chieftains, has fled to the mountains, and is now carrying on the battle in the clefts of the rocks. Well, sir, what a nation that would be to recognize, a nation in the cleft of a rock!

[Here the hammer fell.]

Mr. BUTLER, of Massachusetts. I trust I may be allowed five minutes more.

Mr. BENTON. I move that the time of the gentleman be extended for five minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. BUTLER, of Massachusetts. I only wish that time to notice one topic which has been very much misrepresented. I have here half a dozen Cuban bonds of \$500 each, more or less, which were taken from the pockets of different newspaper reporters—for what purpose they were there you can easily imagine—not by force, but by paying for them fifteen cents on the dollar. Having got all of these bonds I want, I am going to “bear the market.” [Laughter.] I propose from these very bonds to show that there is no independent Government in Cuba, and never has been. Why, sir, the insurgents have not a Government in Cuba strong enough to issue a bond; and that can be done by about the weakest Government on earth. Let me read the language of one of these bonds. The face of the bond is in Spanish; but for fear that those whose hands the bonds would pass in do not understand Spanish, the contract is written on the back. Those who got up these bonds could not have counted on a very large circulation of them among members of Congress, because we all understand Spanish. [Laughter.] The translation on the back of these bonds reads thus:

“The republic of Cuba, through José Morales Lemus, president of the Central Republican Junta of Cuba and Porto Rico, acting under special authority, hereby acknowledges itself bound to the bearer in the sum of \$500, with interest at the rate of seven per cent. per annum from the date hereof; said interest to be paid at the dates and upon the conditions following, namely, after the ratification of a treaty of peace between the Government of Spain and the republic of Cuba; or after the overthrow of the authority of the Spanish Government in the island of Cuba; or after the recognition by the Government of the United States of America of the political independence of the island of Cuba.” &c.

In other words, and this is what the President so properly animadverted upon in his message to us, these men come into this country and issue these bonds, every one of which is a bet on the action of this Government. The President does not say or intimate that gentlemen here have been influenced by them, but complains that a pretended government should have issued them. I am sure no member of this House has been so influenced. My colleague [Mr. BANKS] was long since known as an old friend of Cuba along with me; and we are not the kind of men to whom they give bonds to influence our action.

Mr. BANKS. I am sorry you did not keep up with me.

Mr. BUTLER, of Massachusetts. No, sir; I could not do that, I agree. You go too fast and too far.

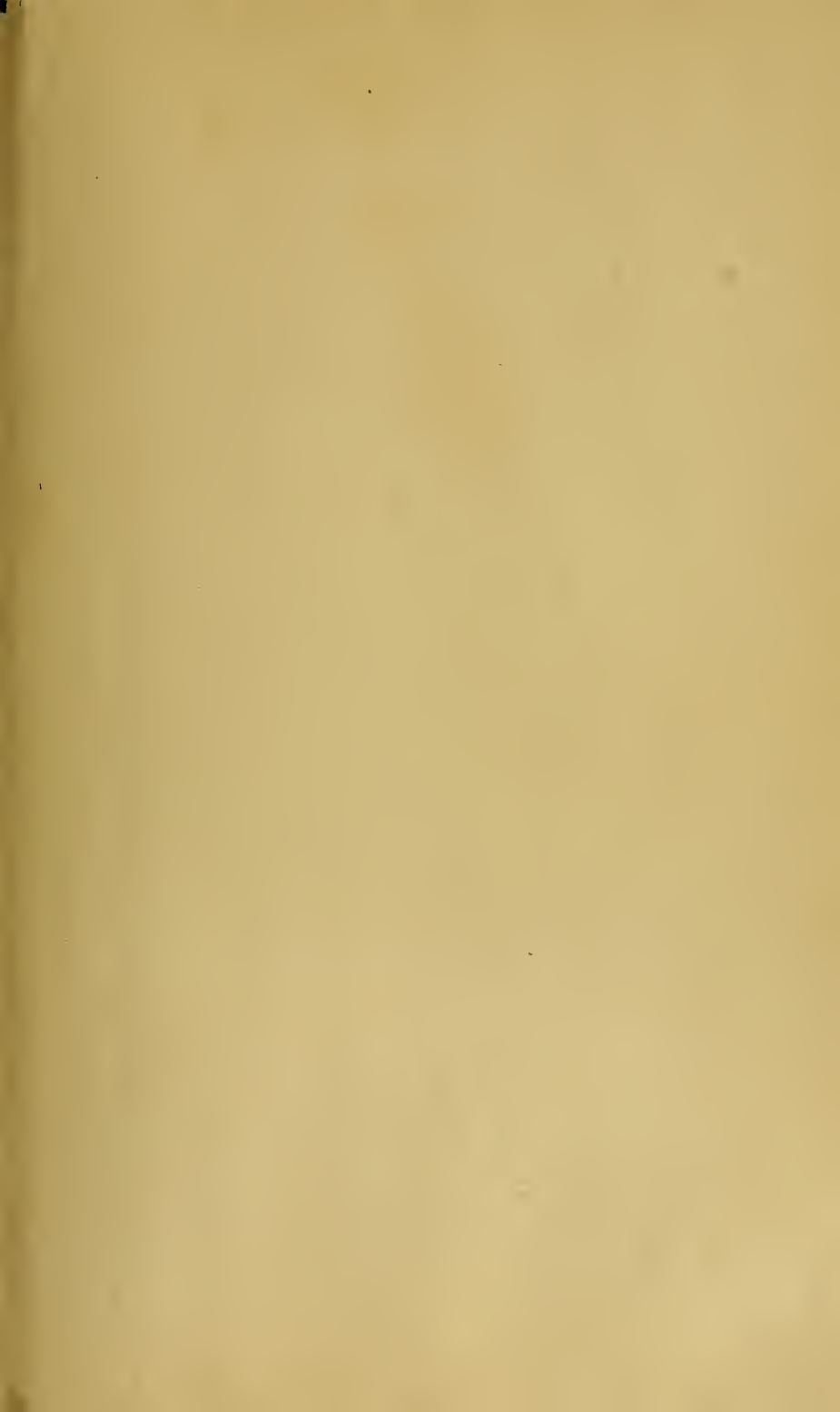
Again, my gallant friend from Illinois [Mr. LOGAN] was an old friend of Cuba; and no man ever approached him with bonds or ever thought of it. They never approach with such bonds as these a man who knows anything.

But, sir, has anybody received any of these bonds? I propose not to talk about any testimony in the committee, but I have within my knowledge evidence which enables me to assert as a fact that \$2,000,000 of these bonds were last September put into the hands of the Peruvian minister upon a contract that they were to be paid over to a lobby agent if he would procure from the President a recognition of the belligerency of Cuba. That failing, and the attempt was pressed in every way, the same \$2,000,000 or another \$2,000,000 of bonds was, on the 8th of December, deposited in the Union Safe Deposit Company in a sealed package, under the hand of Francisco Fesser, the treasurer of Cuba, and another lobby agent of this city, who will be hereafter compelled to answer upon this question; and those bonds were so deposited for the purpose of influencing the decision of this House. That deposit was not taken out until the investigation on the subject was undertaken by this House.

No man has received any of these bonds. Let me show why, for I desire to exhibit the facts for the benefit of the country. Although that man who said he “bought and sold us like sheep” was found with \$20,000 of these bonds in his pocket, no present member of Congress ever received any! When one or two attempts to place these bonds were made upon members of Congress the men who made such attempts were treated exactly as they should have been. They were ordered to get out with their stuff, or they would be sent to the bottom of the stairs.

I find nothing to complain of in the action of my associates in this behalf. What I do complain of is this ill-advised action of the Cuban junta in employing scoundrels, lobbyists and slysters around this Capitol to put us in such a position that every member who votes upon the question of Cuba must do so with but dependent on the result of his vote.

[Here the hammer fell.]



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